implemented in four years, rural drinking water has been included as one of the components. Under Bharat Nirman - rural drinking water, all uncovered and slipped-back habitations are to be covered and water quality-affected habitations are to be addressed including schools to enable the people to have access to safe drinking water.

Under Bharat Nirman programme, Orissa has reported 504 habitations affected with Fluoride contamination. To address the water quality problems in drinking water in a focused manner, Revised Submission on water quality was launched in 2006-07 and upto 20% of ARWSP fund can be utilized for the same. Under the Revised Submission on water quality, Orissa has been provided Rs. 17, 47.22 lakh in 2006-07 and Rs. 123, 03.00 lakh in 2007-08. In 2008-09, Orissa has been allocated Rs.298,68.00 lakh under ARWSP out of which, the State can utilize up to 20% of the total fund on addressing water quality problems *inter alia* which includes fluoride contamination in drinking water.

Connecting villages with link road

602. SHRI RAJNITI PRASAD: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to connect each village with a link road;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the number of villages, particularly in Himachal Pradesh, connected so far with a link road under PMGSY;

(d) the names and number of more villages which will be connected with the link road during the current financial year; and

(e) whether Government will also connect Magwani-Nandla link road under Chirgaon Tehsil in Shimla District during the current financial year as the population of Nandla village is more than 1000?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI SURYAKANTA PATIL): (a) and (b) The objective of the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) is to provide Connectivity, by way of an All-weather Road, to the eligible unconnected Habitations in the rural areas, in such a way that all Unconnected Habitations with a population of 500 persons and above are covered. In respect of the Hill States (North-East, Sikkim, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Uttarakhand) and Desert areas (as identified by Desert Development Programme) as well as the Tribal (Schedule V) areas, the objective is to connect Habitations with a population of 250 persons and above. Using these eligibility criteria, it is proposed to connect 1, 66,994 habitations under the scheme.

(c) So far, 2,304 habitations have been connected with a link road under PMGSY in Himachal Pradesh. This includes habitations having population less than 250 persons which are incidentally connected while connecting habitations eligible under PMGSY.

(d) Proposals for sanction under New connectivity /Upgradation for the road works to be taken up under PMGSY during the current financial year are yet to be received from the State of Himachal Pradesh. However, out of the projects already sanctioned and under different stages of implementation, about 300 habitations are being targeted for providing connectivity under PMGSY in the current year.

(e) Nandla village has already been connected by Badiara Nandla road under PMGSY. Magwani village has also been covered by the above road as the Magwani village is only at a horizontal distance of 100 metre from Badiara Nandla road.

Magwani Nandla link road has been constructed up to a length of 1.00 Km out of 1.500 Km under MPLAD funds.

Extension of NREGA across the country

603. SHRI DHARAM PAL SABHARWAL: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government has decided to extend the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) across the country;

(b) if so, the details in this regard; and

(c) the details of financial aid reserved for poverty schemes and water conservation during the next 2 years for the State of Punjab?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI CHANDRA SEKHAR SAHU): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. NREGA was launched in 200 select districts on 2.2.2006. The Act was extended to 130 additional districts during the year 2007-08 and has been extended to all the remaining rural areas of the country with effect from 1.4.2008.

(c) NREGA is demand driven and not allocation based programme. Annual provisions are made in the budget at central level for implementation of the Act on the basis of projected labour demand during the year. As such funds are not reserved for any of the permissible activity under the NREG Act.

Monitoring of rural development projects

604. SHRI KUMAR DEEPAK DAS: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any system of regular monitoring and vigilance of various projects work under rural development; and

(b) if so, the details of reports of such work of 2007-08 in the district of Barpeta, Bongaigaon and Chirang in Assam?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI SURYAKANTA PATIL): (a) and (b) The Ministry of Rural Development has developed a comprehensive system of monitoring the implementation of the Programmes, including utilization of funds, through Periodical Progress Reports, Performance Review Committee meetings, Area Officer's Scheme, Vigilance and Monitoring Committees at the State/District Level, with greater involvement of Members of Parliament, and National Level Monitors.

As per the information received from the Government of Assam, the State Level Vigilance and Monitoring Committee (V&MC) meeting was held on 14.2.2008 during the year 2007-08. The District Level Vigilance and Monitoring Committee meetings were held in Bongaigaon District on 27.7.2007 and 20.8.2008. In Barpeta District the V&MC has been held on 30.8.2008.